

Dear Chairmen Sanchez and McCrory, Ranking Members McCarty and Berthel,

I would like to testify in favor of SB949 and against SB948. I would also request clarification for SB886 specifically with respect to special education.

I believe that charter and non-traditional schools offer an opportunity to provide quality education to pupils from the educationally disadvantaged backgrounds. Inner-city schools are failing, they are failing nearly all of the students enrolled. The issue is not the class size or funding. The issue is the culture of not giving any importance to education, uninvolved parents, kids who are disruptive and cannot be disciplined. These are not the majority, maybe a small minority, however, they create conditions in schools that prevent other kids from achieving their potential.

Charter schools create opportunities for the rest of the kids to escape that environment and go to school where they will be encouraged, challenged and held accountable. As such, charter schools should be promoted and encouraged and money should follow pupils wherever they choose to enroll.

Furthermore, I feel that as the money follows the student, I oppose double-funding of ECS education costs to the cities. It is just a common sense measure. Why would the state pay a city for a student it does not educate?

Lastly, I would like to request clarification for the Bill SB886. It is not clear how money will be distributed, who is going to be paying for the excess costs and who decides what is a reasonable cost.

Sincerely,

Michael Levin
New Canaan